Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 05716 121355Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 SS-15
SSO-00 NSCE-00 SP-02 PM-05 PA-01 L-03 /047 W
----------098777 121405Z /14
O 121317Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0864

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDIP, IN
SUBJECT: WINCHESTER ARTICLE ON DIPLOMATIC TRAVEL
WITHIN INDIA

REF: STATE 092335

1. SINCE WINCHESTER'S ARTICLE (REFTEL) HAS NOT REACHED NEW DELHI AS OF COB APRIL 12. (THE WINCHESTER PIECE WAS PICKED UP BY THE "HINDU'S" WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT IN AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE APRIL 12 EDITION.) WE CAN CONFIRM THAT GOI CIRCULATED NOTE TO ALL FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN INDIA AND ALL STATE GOVERNMENTS, MARCH 29, 1978, REITERATING AN OCT 21, 1957 NOTE. THE LATEST NOTE STATES THAT STATE GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN APPROACHED DIRECTLY BY DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS CONCERNING VISITS BY THEIR OFFICERS WITHOUT INFORMING MEA WHICH RESULTS IN "AVOIDABLE EMBARRASSMENT." MEA THEREFORE REQUESTS DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS TO "INTIMATE" THE MINISTRY OF VISITS OUTSIDE OF DELHI OF ALL DIPLOMATIC OFFICERS "WELL IN ADVANCE, GIVING FULL DETAILS REGARDING DATE OF DEPARTURE, MODE OF TRAVEL, PURPOSE OF VISIT, DURATION OF STAY AND THE PLACE AT WHICH THE HEAD OF MISSION OR THE DIPLOMATIC OFFICERS WILL STAY, TO ENABLE THIS MINISTRY TO GIVE ADEQUATE NOTICE TO THE STATE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED."

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2. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS CIRCULAR WAS GENERATED BECAUSE OF THE COMPLAINT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF U.P. WHICH WAS CONTACTED DIRECTLY BY A CHIEF OF MISSION WHO DESIRED TO VISIT THAT STATE WITHOUT GOING THROUGH MEA. DEPARTMENT IS CORRECT THAT MANY IF NOT ALL EMBASSIES IN NEW DELHI HAVE IGNORED THE '57 NOTE. WE BELIEVE THEY PROBABLY WILL IGNORE THE LAST REQUEST AS WELL.

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3. AS A COURTESY THE EMBASSY HAS ROUTINELY NOTIFIED MEA OF THE TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF NEW DELHI OF THE AMBASSADOR BUT OF NO OTHER MISSION OFFICER. (WE DO NOT PROVIDE THE DETAILS REQUESTED IN THE LATEST CIRCULAR.) WE INTEND TO CONTINUE TO DO THIS FOR THE AMBASSADOR, BUT COMPLIANCE WITH RESPECT TO OTHER MISSION OFFICERS WOULD BE CUMBERSOME AND MIGHT EVEN DEFEAT THE PURPOSE OF MUCH OF THE TRAVEL.

4. BELIEVE THAT PRESS GUIDANCE SUGGESTED PARA 2 REFTEL SHOULD BE MODIFIED AS FOLLOWS:

"LAST MONTH THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT REITERATED A 1957 REQUEST TO ALL EMBASSIES IN NEW DELHI TO INFORM THE GOI OF THE PLANS OF THEIR OFFICERS TO TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF THE CAPITAL. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST IS TO AVOID ANY DIFFICULTIES OR POSSIBLE EMBARRASSMENT IF LOCAL OFFICIALS OUTSIDE OF NEW DELHI WERE NOT AWARE OF A VISIT OF FOREIGN OFFICIALS TO THEIR JURISDICTION. WE DO NOT CONSIDER THIS REQUEST AN EFFORT TO RESTRICT OR LIMIT IN ANY WAY THE TRAVEL OF DIPLOMATS IN INDIA."

5. IN CONSIDERING HOW TO REPLY IF PRESSED WHETHER THE US INTENDS TO COMPLY WITH THE LATEST REQUEST, WE SHOULD BE GUIDED BY AN INTEREST IN HAVING THIS ISSUE DIE AWAY SO THAT WE CAN CONTINUE TO OBSERVE OUR TIME-HONORED PRACTICES. WE WOULD
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RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN NOT STATE PUBLICLY THAT WE INTEND TO IGNORE THE REQUIREMENT. IT WOULD BE BEST MERELY TO SAY THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL SEEK FURTHER INFORMATION FROM EMBASSY NEW DELHI AND LEAVE IT AT THAT. DEPENDING ON HOW THE QUESTION IS PUT, WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO REVIEW OUR PRACTICES IN LIGHT OF AN ASSESSMENT OF HOW SIGNIFICANT A PROBLEM THE ISSUE WAS LIKELY TO BECOME. WE WOULD CONSULT WITH A FEW OTHER MISSIONS HERE IN UNDERTAKING SUCH A REVIEW. WE WOULD HOPE THAT IT WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY.

6. IF ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. APPLIES OR INTENDS TO APPLY ANY FORM OF RESTRICTION TO INDIAN DIPLOMATS IN THE U.S., EMBASSY AGREES THAT REPLY SHOULD STATE THAT THE ISSUE OF RESTRICTIONS OR A NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT FOR THE INDIAN EMBASSY DOES NOT ARISE. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF RESTRICTIONS AS NONE HAVE BEEN IMPOSED BY THE GOI ON OUR DIPLOMATS. AS FOR A REQUIREMENT FOR NOTIFICATION, THE STATE DEPARTMENT DOES NOT WISH TO ACT AS AN INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE U.S.
GOHEEN

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Message Attributes

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